

# WELL. being

SPRING 2011

THE PATH TO GOOD HEALTH

## Four Ways to Control Allergies

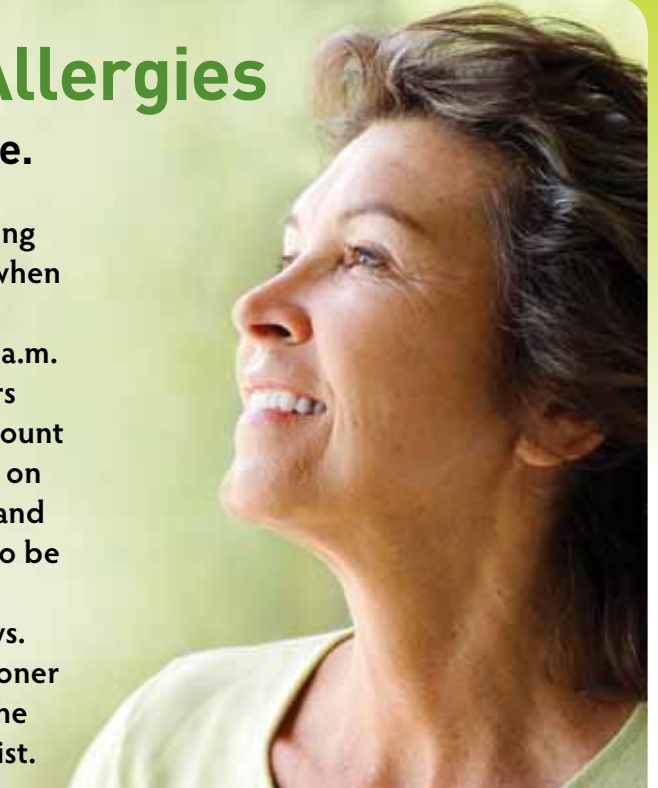
Feel better when your symptoms arrive.

After winter, most folks welcome the signs of spring. But people with allergies may feel differently.

Allergies are also called hay fever or seasonal allergic rhinitis. They are caused by outdoor allergens that typically lead to symptoms in the spring and fall. These symptoms can feel like having a cold.

If you know what you're allergic to, avoid those triggers. You can also feel better by following these four tips:

1. Avoid early morning outdoor activity when pollen is usually heavy, between 5 a.m. and 10 a.m.
2. Try to stay indoors when the pollen count or humidity is high and on windy days when dust and pollen are more likely to be in the air.
3. Shut your windows. Use an air conditioner or humidifier to keep the air inside clean and moist.
4. Keep pets away from areas in your home where you sleep.



Customer Services can help. Call  
1-866-986-0356. They are available  
Monday to Saturday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.



Visit us at [www.metroplusmedicare.org](http://www.metroplusmedicare.org)

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Hours of Operation:  
Monday-Saturday, 8 a.m.-8 p.m.  
Lunes-sábado, 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

Phone: 1-866-986-0356  
TTY: 1-800-881-2812

Health or Wellness or Prevention Information

160 WATER STREET, 3<sup>RD</sup> FL. • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10038

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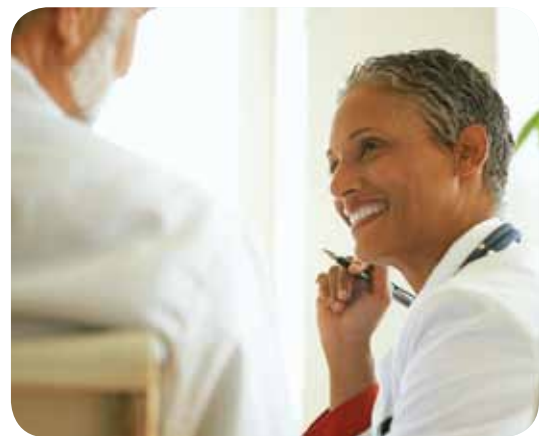


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# Avoid Going Back To the Hospital

When you get out of the hospital, you don't want to go back. Here are a few ways you can avoid another stay.

- 1 Manage your medicines:** Review what you were taking before you went to the hospital. Note which medicines you are supposed to stop taking. Get any new medicines right away—and make sure you understand how to take them properly.
- 2 Follow up with your doctor:** Make an appointment within one to two weeks after your hospital stay. If you don't have an appointment, call Customer Services for help. Call **1-866-986-0356 (TTY: 1-800-881-2812)**.
- 3 Understand your illness:** Is it a short-term or long-term condition? What warning signs should you look out for? When should you call your doctor?
- 4 Be prepared:** Ask your doctor what steps to take to improve your health and prevent future illness.



MetroPlus wants to help you move easily from hospital to home. Once you get home, your Case Manager will call you to see how we can help.

## REACHING FOR THE STARS ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Medicare Program rates how well MetroPlus performs. Areas they rate include customer service, your experience with MetroPlus doctors, getting your prescription drugs, the quality of the care we give you and your whole experience with us.

Medicare rates MetroPlus using stars. In 2010, **we got three out of five stars**. To help improve our service even more, we want to hear from you.

If you have a problem, we want to know so that we can help. For example, if you are having trouble making a doctor's appointment or a problem with your doctor, tell us about it. Call Customer Service, Monday to Saturday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. at **1-866-986-0356** or **TTY/TDD 1-800-881-2812**.



## HEALTHCARE REFORM: 2011 CHANGES

The Affordable Care Act was passed in March 2010. This law gives people with Medicare bigger savings and better quality healthcare. Your Medicare benefits will not change, but new ones have been added.

Here are changes you can expect in 2011:

- People with Medicare will get wellness services like a mammogram, prostate screening and yearly checkup at no cost. Check the list to the right for more services that you don't have to pay for.
- People with Medicare who reach the "gap" get a 50 percent discount on all

brand name drugs. This means if a brand name drug costs \$10, a member pays only \$5.\*

Over the next ten years, there will be more savings until the "gap" closes in 2020.

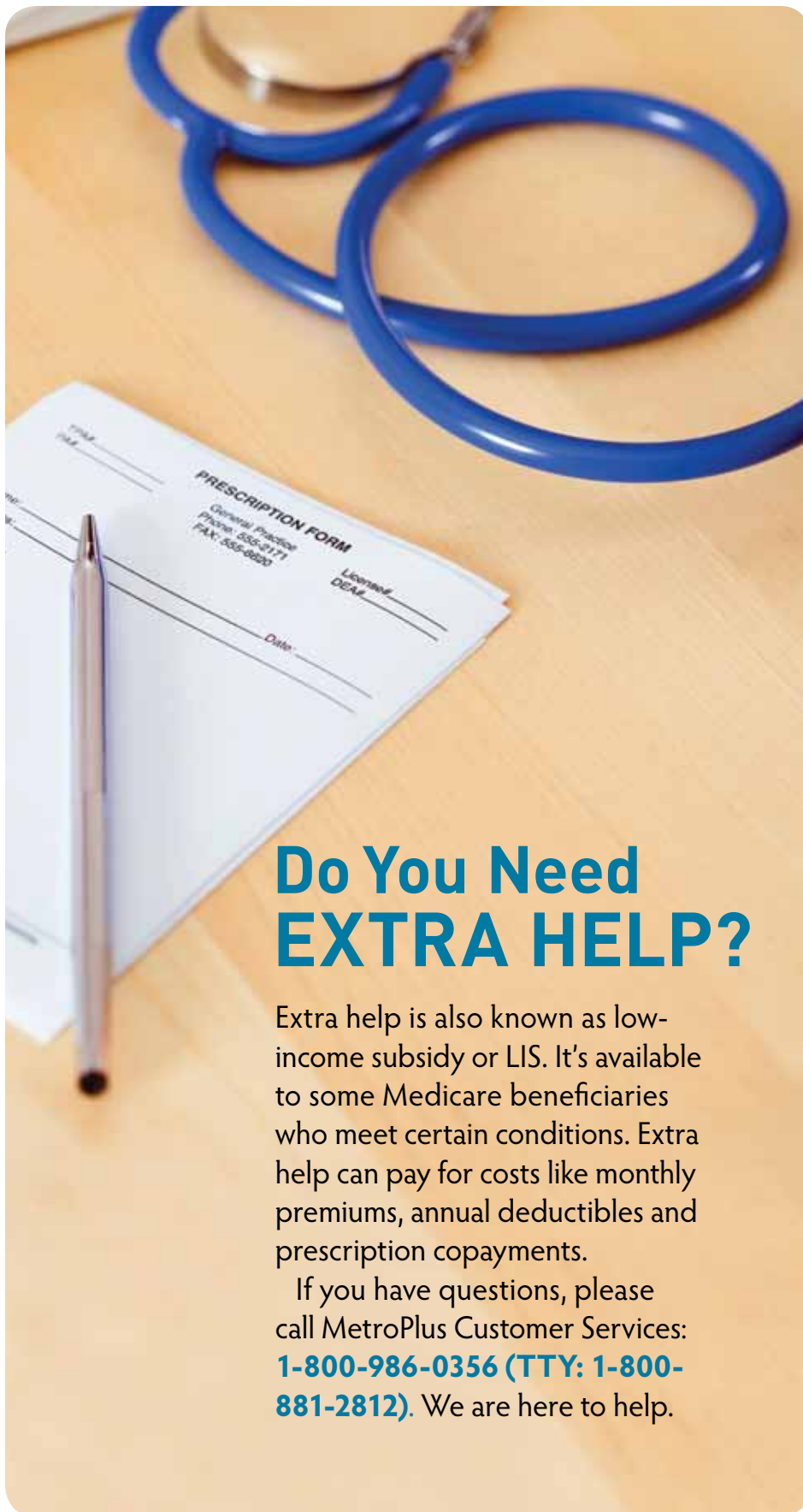
▶ If you have questions about healthcare reform, call MetroPlus Customer Services at **1-866-986-0356** or TTY/TDD **1-800-881-2812**, Monday to Saturday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. You may also call **1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)** or TTY **1-877-486-2048**, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

*\*If you get Low Income Subsidy (LIS), you do not qualify.*

## WELLNESS EXAMS YOU DON'T PAY FOR

These are the services that will be covered as of 2011 with no deductible or copayment:

- Pneumonia, flu and Hepatitis B vaccinations (shots)
- Mammogram screening
- Pap smear and pelvic exam
- Prostate cancer screening tests
- Colorectal cancer screening tests
- Diabetes outpatient self-management training
- Bone mass measurement
- Glaucoma screening
- Medical nutrition therapy services
- Cardiovascular screening blood test
- Diabetes screening tests
- Ultrasound screening for abdominal aortic aneurysm
- Other services (at present limited to HIV testing)



## Do You Need **EXTRA HELP?**

Extra help is also known as low-income subsidy or LIS. It's available to some Medicare beneficiaries who meet certain conditions. Extra help can pay for costs like monthly premiums, annual deductibles and prescription copayments.

If you have questions, please call MetroPlus Customer Services: **1-800-986-0356 (TTY: 1-800-881-2812)**. We are here to help.

## The MetroPlus Call Center: **1-866-986-0356**

Our Call Center is open Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) you talk with can handle any type of call. When you call, the CSR may ask for your first and last name, ID number, date of birth, address and telephone number so we are sure it is you.

And don't forget: Protect your identity. Don't share your private information with others—except if it's the MetroPlus Call Center.

